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Understanding the Knowledge and Attitudes of Parents of Students with Limited English
Proficiency towards Standardized Testing

by

Michele P. Tiedemann

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education

Department of Education Leadership, Management, and Policy

Seton Hall University

May 2018

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ENRICHING THE MIND,
THE HEART AND THE SPIRIT

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION LEADERSHIP MANAGEMENT & POLICY

APPROVAL FOR SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE

Michele Tiedemann, has successfully defended and made the required modifications to the text of the doctoral dissertation for the Ed.D. during this **Spring Semester 2018**.

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

(please sign and date beside your name)

COMMITTEE:	SIGNATURE	DATE
Mentor: Dr. Luke Stedrak	<i>Luke Stedrak</i>	2/21/18
Dr. Daniel Gutmore	<i>Daniel Gutmore</i>	2/20/18
Dr. Michael Kuchar <i>(LS)</i>	<i>Michael Kuchar</i>	2/20/18

The mentor and any other committee members who wish to review revisions will sign and date this document only when revisions have been completed. Please return this form to the Office of Graduate Studies, where it will be placed in the candidate's file and submit a copy with your final dissertation to be bound as page number two.

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ABSTRACT

State and federal regulations mandated standardized testing of students, including disadvantaged students: economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). The results of the standardized tests were used for the accountability of school districts by way of state and federal reports, resulting in standardized testing also being referred to as high-stakes testing. Standardized testing was criticized for a number of reasons, including holding teachers accountable for students' scores (Ysseldyke et al., 2004) and subjecting students to stress and anxiety brought on by the demands of standardized testing (Albrecht & Joles, 2003; Von der Embse & Hasson, 2012). Another criticism was that parents may have felt uninformed or ill-informed of the results of their children's standardized tests (Osburn, Stegman, Suitt, & Ritter, 2004). Proponents of standardized assessments pointed out that standardized testing assisted in determining which facets of education and which specific schools needed enhancement.

The purpose of this study was to better understand the knowledge and attitudes of parents of Spanish-speaking LEP students. The literature review examined two primary groups that had been identified as highly disadvantaged when it came to standardized testing: students with disabilities and students with LEP. Minimal research seemed to be available regarding parents' views on standardized testing. It had been found that parents were involved and were very interested in their child's performance on standardized tests (Osburn et al., 2004; Mulvenon et al., 2005).

This descriptive quantitative study was conducted in a suburban New Jersey school district with approximately 5,200 students. Approximately 500 students were from households in which

Spanish is the primary language. The quantitative survey instrument was sent to 223 parents of LEP students via email; 32 responded. The survey questions were presented in both Spanish and English. This study sought to gain understanding of the perspectives of the parents of Spanish-speaking students with LEP with regard to the climate of standardized testing in their child's school, stress related to standardized testing, the value of standardized testing, and communication regarding testing results. The major findings of this study conveyed that parents of Spanish-speaking LEP students did not feel adequately informed about how their children performed on standardized testing. The parents of LEP students viewed the standardized testing as important and expressed that parents and teachers were responsible for helping students improve their performance on the tests. Greater understanding of parents' views may support school administrators and staff members in engaging and communicating with parents of students with LEP.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Federal and state regulations relied heavily on standardized test scores as a means of measuring school effectiveness, a practice which brought about much political and societal debate (Albrecht & Joles, 2003). Such reliance was likely advanced by reports such as *A Nation at Risk* (1983), which emphasized accountability measures. According to Horn (2003), the release of *A Nation at Risk* by the National Commission on Excellence in Education in 1983 reinforced the need for student accountability as well as raised the level of demonstrated proficiency. *A Nation at Risk* (1983) emphasized excellence in education, which encompassed the individual learner performing beyond the boundaries of the individual's ability, the schools that set high expectations from their learners while at the same time attempting to help them in every way possible, and the society in general that adopted a culture of excellence to prepare its people for the challenges that the dynamic and changing environment brought to them (Horn, 2003).

Teachers equated school effectiveness with the quality of instructional methods and practices. Assigning any of the aforementioned factors as the solitary determinant of effectiveness in schools negated the importance of the remaining elements considered by some school stakeholders (Milner, 2013). Despite the societal and political controversy that surrounded standardized testing, mandates existed to utilize high-stakes testing as accountability

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measures of achievement for schools. To illustrate, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 was a federal regulation that required all students to participate in state assessments, regardless of the student's disabilities or disadvantages. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 followed suit: it required all students, regardless of disability, to participate in local and state assessments (Braden & Schroeder, 2004). The results of these assessments were used for accountability of school districts by way of state and federal reports. This was referred to as high-stakes testing. The specification of high-stakes testing was that schools may be penalized for poor performance on state assessments (Braden & Schroeder, 2004).

High-stakes testing was a source of much political and societal controversy. Those opposed to high-stakes testing cited several reasons for their opposition. High-stakes testing was criticized for its potential to discourage teachers from including students with disabilities in their classrooms, due to the practice of holding teachers accountable for students' scores (Ysseldyke et al., 2004). Another criticism was that teachers may have employed practices such as teaching to the test, which reduced instructional time in other areas crucial to the education of students (Benjamin & Pashler, 2015; Jennings & Bearak, 2014). Teachers may have regarded a student's score as indicative of future academic achievement. This could have resulted in lowered expectations for students who performed poorly on standardized tests (William, 2010). Students could have been subjected to stress and anxiety brought on by the demands of standardized testing (Albrecht & Joles, 2003; Von der Embse & Hasson, 2012). Parents may have felt uninformed or ill-informed about the results of their children's standardized tests (Osburn, Stegman, Suitt, & Ritter, 2004).

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Despite these criticisms, proponents of standardized assessments pointed out a number of important objectives of standardized testing. District and statewide assessments assisted in determining which facets of education and which specific schools needed enhancement. Schools' performance on high-stakes testing provided a means for assessing educational programs that may have otherwise been overlooked for added resources and augmentations, such as programs for students with disabilities. In essence, the positive intention of high-stakes testing was to assess effective instruction and the need for remediation, as well as to evaluate student achievement (Koedinger, McLaughlin, & Heffernan, 2010). The Center on Educational Policy, a public education advocacy group, noted that testing remained in the forefront of education assessment because according to the group, testing was the most "defensible" way to make interpretations about student learning (Koedinger et al., 2010).

Statement of the Problem

There had been a growing resistance to standardized testing by parents who refused to let their children take these tests. This resistance to standardized tests was also called the "opt-out movement," which highlighted that the NCLB did not specifically prohibit or allow opting out of standardized tests (Harris, 2015). The opt-out movement soared in the state of New York in 2015: more than 200,000 third through eighth graders sat out the state's standardized tests (Harris, 2015). The Department of Education estimated that 900,000 out of the 1.1 million eligible test-takers took the exam, while the rest did not without a "known valid reason" (e.g., absence due to illness) (Harris, 2015).

Literature about parental perspectives and understanding of the meaning and purpose of standardized testing appeared minimal. Studies (i.e., Mulvenon, Sean, Stegman, Charles, &

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Ritter, 2005; Osburn et al., 2004) supported the idea that parents were not sufficiently informed or were unaware of how their children performed on standardized tests. The majority of the parents in these studies indicated a lack of communication between the parents and the school regarding test results, which led to some degree of confusion or misunderstanding on the parents' part (Mulvenon et al., 2005; Osburn et al., 2004). School administrators' responsibilities towards engaging families and maintaining communication with families necessitated ensuring parents' understanding of their children's progress and assessment results. Translation to families' spoken language was considered best practice for engaging and communicating with families (Epstein, 2002).

Given the minimal and perhaps even outdated research studies on parents' knowledge, views, and attitudes towards standardized testing in addition to the growing resistance towards it, there was a need to reexamine what exactly parents knew about standardized testing. There was a need to understand how parents felt about standardized testing, and what factors affected parents' knowledge and attitudes towards it. The purpose of this study was to know more about the knowledge and attitudes of parents towards standardized testing. This study focused on the Spanish-speaking parents of LEP students from third through twelfth grade classes in a suburban school district in New Jersey.

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Significance of the Study

Parents played an important role in the education of their children; parental involvement and encouragement helped a child excel and continued to do so even when the child had entered into adolescence and adulthood stages (Flouri & Buchanan, 2004). Parents and their attitudes about education influenced the child's own attitudes and inspired and showed them how to take charge of their own educational journey. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 and New Jersey Administrative Code (NJAC) 6A:14-2.3 recognized the important role of parents in mandates that required parental notification and consent on some educational issues, both in general education and special education. Parental involvement, defined as "the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities," had been a constant focus of Title I in the NCLB (Department of Education, 2004, p. 3). The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, on the other hand, required each school develop a parental involvement policy which must be communicated to parents. Many schools made concentrated and continued efforts to increase family and school communications and to expand parental participation and engagement in school activities through parent-teacher organization and school-community events (DOE, 2004). One area that needed further examination was how parents felt about and understood the structure of standardized testing in schools. Research (i.e., Mulvenon et al, 2005; Osburn et al., 2004) supported the idea that parents felt inadequately advised of their children's performance on standardized testing and believed that they were not receiving sufficient explanation of how to interpret test results.

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Research Questions

This study investigated parental knowledge and attitudes towards standardized testing of LEP students. For this dissertation, the primary research question was:

What were the knowledge and attitudes of the parents of Limited English Proficiency students regarding the New Jersey state mandated standardized testing?

To achieve this, the following secondary questions were also answered in this dissertation:

1. What, if any, value did parents place on standardized testing?
2. How did parents view the schools' communication with them regarding their children's standardized testing?
3. How, if at all, did the parents equate stress (pressure to perform well) and/or anxiety with standardized testing on their children?
4. How, if at all, did the parents equate stress (pressure for students to perform well) and/or anxiety with standardized testing on their children's teachers?

Overview of Methods

This study was conducted in a suburban school district comprised of four elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The total student population of the district was approximately 5,200; approximately 500 students were from households in which Spanish is the primary language. The quantitative survey instrument was sent to parents of LEP students via email; the survey was sent in both Spanish and English.

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Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

Limitations of this study included the lack of responses from all survey recipients. Recipients' time constraints, interest levels, and inaccurate/incomplete email addresses also impacted the response rate. The survey instrument lacked the opportunity for respondents to ask clarifying questions. The delimitations of this study included the following: the study was limited to the parental views of the parents from one New Jersey suburban district; and the study was limited to parents of students for whom Spanish is their first language, and other languages were not included. The study was limited to parents of students in grades four through secondary school. Students in these grades had participated in one or more years of standardized testing.

Framework and Organization of the Study

The framework of this study incorporated theories of parental involvement in education, views of standardized testing, studies regarding disadvantaged students and standardized testing, and perspectives on standardized testing. Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) described parental involvement as having three dimensions: behavioral involvement, personal involvement, and cognitive/intellectual involvement. This study reflected the personal involvement facet of Grolnick and Slowiaczek's framework. Parental understanding of children's standardized testing experiences and outcomes had the potential to provide parents with information to share positive interactions with their children about education. Mulvenon et al. (2005) and Osburn et al. (2004) supported the idea that parents were not sufficiently informed or were unaware of how their children performed on standardized tests. The majority of the parents in these studies indicated a

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lack of communication between the parents and the school regarding test results, which led to some degree of confusion or misunderstanding on the parents' part (Mulvenon et al., 2005; Osburn et al., 2004).

Chapter 1 of this study introduces the history and principles of standardized testing. The statement of the problem and research questions are presented in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 provides an overview of relevant literature and research studies about standardized testing. Chapter 3 asserts the research methodology, population and sample, data collection, and analysis procedures. Chapter 4 describes the results of this study. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the findings and recommendations for future research. Appendix A includes a copy of the survey instrument.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The literature expanded upon the disadvantages of high-stakes testing, from dictating what is taught in the classroom to impacting the livelihood of teachers and administrators through their influence on evaluation outcomes. The literature in this review presented the narrowing of curricula as a consequence of high-stakes testing through the increased time administrators and teachers had allotted for subject areas that were included in the standardized

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assessment. The literature showed that this practice had become routine, despite the support demonstrated for non-tested subject areas, such as social studies and the arts. The research literature was strong in support of the challenges faced by disabled and disadvantaged students with regard to standardized testing (Gartland & Strosnider, 2004).

This literature review also explored the emotional bearing of high-stakes testing on students, including test anxiety and internalization of score outcomes. Dutro and Selland (2012) revealed the burden many students endured regarding how their performance on high-stakes testing would impact grade promotion and graduation, even when such a burden was unwarranted according to specific district policies for grade retention. This literature review also explored the other stakeholders in education such as parents, teachers, and administrators, as well as the literature concerning their corresponding perspectives on standardized testing.

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Purpose of Review

The purpose of this review was to examine the literature influencing the many components of the educational system, and primarily how research findings impacted decision-making regarding teachers and students. The review considered the effect of high-stakes testing on curricula design, both from a historical and a contemporary perspective. To address the transformation of contemporary curriculum from its rudimentary implementation, historical material from Wilford Aiken's (1942) *The Eight-Year Study* and the Department of the Interior Bureau of Education's (1918) *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education* was reviewed. Addressed in this literature review are the narrowing of the curriculum as a consequence of high-stakes testing, the paradoxes of high-stakes testing, and the contradictory viewpoints of advocates and adversaries of high-stakes testing. Much of the oppositional outlook regarding high-stakes testing focused on requirements mandating the inclusion of disadvantaged students in these assessments, such as students with disabilities and students with LEP. Emotional factors stemming from high-stakes standardized assessment were also an area of interest and research. The prevalence of test anxiety as a concomitant entity to high-stakes testing presented as a serious consideration in decision-making dependent upon the results of high-stakes testing.

Criteria for Inclusion and Exclusion of Literature

The literature in this review explored factors affecting the efficacy of high-stakes testing as they related to decision-making regarding teachers and students. The criteria for inclusion in this literature review included the examination of high-stakes testing from its origination to its opposing viewpoints to contemporaneous debate. Research providing a historical viewpoint was included as a means of staging the review. Other research was selected to represent both

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adversarial and supportive perspectives. Though more studies exemplifying positive aspects of high-stakes testing were sought, a minimum appeared to be available. As the research describing the drawbacks was uncovered, specific areas of hazard were examined and included, such as the impact of high-stakes testing on students with disabilities and students meeting criteria as economically disadvantaged, as well students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. In describing the outcomes of high-stakes testing, particularly with the majority of these outcomes defined as negative, including research promoting alternatives to high-stakes testing emerged as an important factor.

The selection of literature for inclusion relied on peer-reviewed, up-to-date literature from periodic journals, books, and education acts including NCLB and ESEA. Literature excluded from this review included outdated articles and material from less scholarly periodicals. Greater examination of the political controversy surrounding high-stakes testing was considered for inclusion in this review, such as the impact of standardized testing on teacher employment issues and union negotiations. Inclusion of the greater political controversy was rejected as deviating from the intended course of the review as an examination of the most prominent aspects of high-stakes testing's influence on decisions impacting student achievement and educational practices. Small sample sizes, restrictive subject groups, and experimental constrictions, such as privacy issues, all arose as notable limitations.

Review of Methods for Literature Survey

Relevant research, including journal articles and books, was located via online search engines such as EBSCO, ERIC, Google, and Google Scholar. Search terms included the phrases "high-stakes testing," "standardized tests," "teacher perspectives," "student perspectives,"

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“parent perspectives,” “accommodations of students with disability,” “alternate assessment,” “limited English proficiency (LEP) students,” “formative assessment,” “a nation at risk,” and combinations of these terms. Only peer-reviewed, full-text articles were reviewed as a means of finding the most focused and contemporary literature regarding high-stakes testing. Government reports and legislation were reviewed for information regarding historical perspectives, including the National Commission on Excellence in Education’s (1983) *A Nation at Risk*, Aiken’s (1942) *The Eight-Year Study*, and the Department of the Interior Bureau of Education’s (1918) *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education*.

Limitations of this literature review included a noteworthy lack of research in support of high-stakes testing in comparison to research opposing such testing. Small sample sizes were evident in much of the research reviewed, which included quasi-experiment, quantitative, and qualitative methods. Though standardized testing had not always included testing in the majority of grade levels, contemporaneous regulations for standardized testing required assessment in the great majority of grade levels, including grades three, four, five, six, seven, and eight, along with one assessment in high school. Taking these requirements into consideration, the research in this review included studies that were conducted in elementary school, middle school, and high school.

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High-Stakes Testing and the Curriculum

A Historical Background and Perspective

To understand standardized assessments, it was important to highlight that standardized testing had been around since the mid-19th century in the U.S. According to the report *Testing in American schools: Asking the right questions* by the US Congress, Office of Technology Assessment (1992), a number of important trends in the history of American educational testing were established between 1840 - 1875. Oral examinations administered by teachers and schools were replaced by formal written testing at around the same time that schools changed their mission from servicing the wealthy elite social class to educating the general public. Early standardized testing, while not initially planned and designed to make valid comparisons among schools and its students, was generally used for that purpose. A number of countries used standardized testing to project students' career paths, beginning with the Chinese Civil Service Exam in 1904 and continuing in European countries until at least the mid-1940s. (Smith, 2014, p. 5). In the late 19th century, the U.S. public school system began to first implement the use of standardized tests (Emery, 2007, p. 27). The latter part of the 20th century saw an international increase in the use of large-scale standardized tests. Benavot and Tanner (2007) discovered that the number of countries conducting standardized tests annually increased more than twofold from 1995 to 2006, with 81% of developed countries administering standardized tests and 51% of developing countries following suit (Smith, 2014, p. 7). The use of standardized testing moved to place the onus for the outcomes on the schools rather than on individual students. In the U.S., the accountability for test outcomes was equated with individual students' performance in the 1960s, but began to shift to school accountability in the 1970s. The shift to school accountability

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was likened to the economic recession of the 1970s, which sparked a concern about the state of U.S. schools and coincided with the recognition of the racial achievement gap in education (Smith, 2014, p.8). These perceptions of the failure of the American school system led to the 1983 report, *A Nation at Risk*. Having educators shift to a “data-driven” mode of education had been the goal of corporate America since 1989 (Emery, 2007, 35). By 2000, 40 states had put in place a system of school accountability for test outcomes. There were two avenues of school accountability: evaluative and punitive. Evaluative accountability was intended to measure the quality of the schools and compare school outcomes. Punitive accountability resulted in penalties, primarily financial sanctions, against schools demonstrating poor performance (Smith, 2014, p. 15). Studies acknowledged that accountability systems could lead to dubious practices such as moving more students into special education for testing, excluding low-achieving students from testing through school suspensions, repetitive teaching to the test, and narrowing of the curriculum to focus on tested subject areas and reduce time spent on non-tested subjects (Smith, 2014, p. 19). Practices to exclude students from testing may have led to a less collaborative relationship between parents and schools, and resulted instead in an adversarial relationship in which blame was assigned for poor performance.

From the early days of standardized testing, it was evident that standardized tests had always been more useful to important decision-makers in education such as administrators, legislators, and other school authorities compared to direct stakeholders (e.g., students and classroom teachers) (Mulvenon, Stegman, & Ritter, 2005). Standardized assessment was grounded in the principles of fairness and efficiency in the organization and allocation of educational opportunities: fairness, in the sense that students were offered the same educational opportunities in other schools or neighborhood; and efficiency, in the sense that that there was

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indeed an orderly provision of educational services to everybody. While the principle was considered noble, the tests soon became controversial, primarily because they were used as a basis for selection. According to a survey conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Education in 1925, intelligence and achievement tests were used to classify students and group them by ability, raising questions of fairness (Cited from U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, 1992). Issues of racial equity, higher standards of schooling, and educational access soon came to the forefront concerning standardized testing (U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, 1992).

Much of the controversy concerned the scope of the consequences of high-stakes testing across the country, which was increasing all over the country as states moved to comply with the demand to create laws that made it possible to link students' performance on high-stakes tests to teachers' and schools' evaluations (Dutro & Selland, 2012). Stakeholders believed that high-stakes testing policies placed increased pressure on teachers to raise students' standardized test scores. At the same time, standardized testing often led to teachers having less decision-making input regarding the curriculum that was taught. A common complaint was that teachers were pressured to "teach to the test" wherein much of what was taught in schools was focused solely on the content of the test. This thereby was narrowing the curriculum, which Reich and Bally (2010) described as a "vast, incoherent laundry list that teachers struggled to cover and students struggled to remember" (p. 179).

Another type of teaching to the test was teaching test-taking skills specific to the test form, which could have potentially narrowed the focus of instruction even more (Dutro & Selland, 2012). At the same time, teaching test-taking skills specific to the test form, such as

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“teaching to the rubric” wherein students were taught to include specific phrases or structures in their responses to receive full credit, may have also artificially inflated students’ scores. While this may have allowed students to express their knowledge more accurately, in other cases, it could have potentially overstated the students’ mastery, thereby inflating students’ scores (Jennings & Bearak, 2014).

Schools faced the continued challenge of assisting students in recognizing that education was a productive and worthwhile use of their time and energy. Parents and guardians could have assisted schools in encouraging this view by demonstrating their faith in the merit of a comprehensive education. Educational leaders, on the other hand, needed to take the helm in this endeavor by planning and providing secondary programs that addressed the issues affecting youth. This is demonstrated in *The Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education* by the inclusion of educating girls in “the household arts” (Department of The Interior Bureau of Education, 1918). This was not of concern at the time of this study, but in 1918, this was a practical societal concern that was duly addressed by the schools. Contemporaneous educational programming strove to address societal concerns accordingly with substance abuse awareness programs (Sussman, Sun, Rohrbach, & Spruijt-Metz, 2012), expanded opportunities for vocational education (Mourshed, Farrell, & Barton, 2012), and enhancements of programs for students with disabilities and students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Quaye & Harper, 2015), though as stated, improvements and revisions were needed. Educational leaders may have heeded the findings of *The Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education* as such improvements and revisions.

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Correspondingly, *The Eight-Year Study Project* was rife with information useful for modern education. This study demonstrated the possibility, and hence the superiority, of delivering instruction in the basic academics of education through multifaceted activities and experiences rather than segregated rote instruction. A broad array of successful avenues to both college acceptance and effective vocational education were revealed (Aiken, 1942). *The Eight-Year Study* commanded recognition of the need to include many representatives in educational planning. Teachers, administrators, students, parents, community members, and other professionals could have provided valid and significant insights for productive education. In *The Eight-Year Study*, such opportunities for involvement led to increases in home-school communication, faculty collaboration, and cooperation between teachers and students. Educational leaders were wise to acknowledge these findings by convening a diverse group of individuals for educational and curriculum planning. In addition to administrators and teachers, curriculum planning committees may well have included specialists in content areas, learning disabilities, social and emotional disabilities, and speech-language development, as well as students and parents (Aiken, 1942). *The Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education* and *The Eight-Year Study* provided a historical perspective that demonstrated the changing outlooks towards educational priorities, including attitudes towards standardized educational assessment.

Standardized assessments were perceived as instruments of reform under the belief that test-based information could radically change the school system (U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, 1992). Despite the fact that high-stakes testing had not yet emerged as the high-profile, controversial topic it was at the time of this study, the findings of *The Eight-Year Study* and *The Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education* had produced vital information for improving educational programs. The professionals involved in these studies provided

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inspiration for all who worked in the field of education by demonstrating the immeasurable positive outcomes that effective education could have provided for both youth and society as a whole.

Effects of High-Stakes Testing on the Curriculum

One of the significant effects of high-stakes testing was the narrowing of the curriculum. Berliner (2011) had examined the effects of high-stakes testing on the curricula of non-tested subjects in response to the increased focus on tested subjects. Data was reviewed from surveys submitted by approximately 500 school districts regarding allotted time for various subjects in their primary grades. Berliner's (2011) findings indicated an indisputable narrowing of the curriculum, wherein 80 percent of school districts reported increasing time allocated for language arts by 75 minutes per week and more than 50 percent of districts reported adding at least 150 more minutes per week for language arts. Meanwhile, 63 percent of districts indicated that the time allotted for mathematics was increased by a minimum of 75 minutes per week and 19 percent of districts noted an increase of 150 minutes per week. Time for science instruction, on the other hand, was estimated to be reduced by approximately one hour per week, and approximately 53 percent of the districts reported that social studies time was reduced by a minimum of 75 minutes weekly to allow for the additional time for language arts and math. Social studies was reported to be the area from which most instructional time was reallocated (Berliner, 2011).

The reduction of time previously earmarked for social studies and civics instruction was opposed by some educational professionals due to the importance of preparing students for

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“responsible citizenship.” Former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor believed that “the primary purpose of public schools in America had always been to help produce citizens who had the knowledge and the skills and the values to sustain our republic as a nation, our democratic form of government” (Berliner, 2011, p. 290) and removing it from the educational system would have left a huge gap in public education.

It should also be noted that time for special subjects, such as physical education, art, and music, was also reduced, despite the fact that these subjects were already apportioned less time than academic subjects (Berliner, 2011). It is also interesting to note that these special subjects were taught more to the wealthy and less to the poor. Wealthier students were more likely to be exposed to a wider range of arts and humanities because they usually belonged to high-achieving schools that did not need to cut back the time for these subjects (Berliner, 2010).

Aside from the changing curriculum time, another area of concern in the narrowing curriculum was the content. In the age of accountability, teachers were given a prescribed curriculum, which included a set of predetermined, scripted curriculum materials, in the hopes of improving students’ performance on high-stakes tests. The rationale for this was that teachers (especially new teachers) were simply not prepared to make logical, suitable, and responsive curricular decisions in the classroom with students. New teachers were described as “lost at sea” in urban settings and the prescribed curriculum was seen as a means to help them know what to teach, when to teach it, and how to teach it (Milner, 2013). The problem with a scripted and narrowed curriculum was that it not only hindered the personal and professional development of the teachers, but it also undermined their creativity and autonomy, and at the same time

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eliminated their opportunities and ability to establish meaningful relationships with their students (Crocco & Costigan, 2007).

With the narrowing of the curriculum, Berliner (2010) feared that students may have no longer been equipped with the set of skills needed in the 21st century. Aside from the basic skills, technical skills and organizational skills needed then (Horn, 2003), Binkley, Erstad, Herman, Raizen, Ripley, Miller-Ricci & Rumble (2011) highlighted the important role that technology played in the 21st century. A complete set of 21st century skills would then have included (1) creativity and innovation; (2) critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making; (3) learning to learn (metacognition); (4) communication; (5) collaboration; (6) information literacy; (7) information and communication (ICT) literacy; (8) local and global citizenship; (9) life and career; and (10) personal and social responsibility (Binkley et al., 2011).

In education, technology provided more individualized instruction, targeting students' specific learning styles (e.g., visual, auditory, and kinesthetic), while arming students with 21st century skills. Solomon & Schrum (2007) noted that while technology was making monumental gains, education remained at a near standstill. Education remained text-based, while computers and other digital devices were the norm in workplaces, as well as in entertainment, social networking, and other venues. The retooling of Bloom's Taxonomy complemented the integration of technology and conferral of 21st century skills for students (Cited from Berliner, 2011).

High-Stakes Testing and the Curriculum Synthesis

A review of the literature on the history of standardized testing revealed the progression of using the results for making comparisons among students in the late 1800s to using the results

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as an accountability measure for schools beginning in the 1970s. A review of primarily theoretical research indicated the effects of the accountability on education, including a narrowing of curricula toward content areas that were the focus of standardized tests to concerns about racial and socio-economic inequity within standardized tests. The literature presented the movement from accountability at the school level to culpability at the level of individual teachers. An indication of teachers being pressured to move the focus of their instruction towards specified content areas while limiting instruction in other areas was noted. The review of the literature demonstrated the impact of standardized testing on the change in what were considered important content areas from “the household arts” in 1918 (Department of The Interior Bureau of Education, 1918) to “teach to the test” in the 21st century (Dutro & Selland, 2012). The review of the literature on standardized testing’s influence on curricula revealed empirical research that verified the narrowing of the curriculum to focus on the tested content areas of language arts and mathematics (Berliner, 2011). The literature review exposed the narrowing of the curriculum’s greater impact on students from lower socio-economic backgrounds versus higher-achieving students from wealthier backgrounds. The literature suggested that curricula in wealthier schools allowed for a greater expanse of content areas (Berliner, 2010). The review of the literature presented the impact on the teachers’ requirement to follow a prescribed curriculum designed to improve students’ performance on standardized tests (Milner, 2013). The literature review on the history of standardized testing and narrowing of the curriculum provided foundational knowledge about the relationship among standardized testing, curricula, and instruction.

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Paradoxes of High-Stakes Testing

Assessments or tests had always existed over the centuries and across nations. Madaus & Russell (2010/2011) pointed out that as early as 200 B.C., the Chinese used assessments to eliminate patronage and open access to civil service. In the Middle East, tests were also used to determine whether a man was ready to be formally part of the Qumran community. Meanwhile, many countries such as England, France, and Italy also used tests to establish standards in education and to make sure that students acquired a certain set of skills (Madaus & Russell, 2010/2011).

Benjamin and Pashler (2015) contended that testing, when used correctly, had a positive effect on students in terms of cognition. Benjamin and Pashler (2015) likened a good test to a mirror, which reflected the student's knowledge at one point in time; the reflection was not constant, and would change over time because there was ongoing and future learning. At the same time, the results of these tests could have also changed the focus of attention and redirected efforts. Thus, testing could have influenced learning, memory, and inference in positive ways (Benjamin & Pashler, 2015).

At the time of this study, the purpose of high-stakes testing was to be an avenue to monitor school and student achievement and utilize test results to enact changes and improvements in schools. However, policies for high-stakes testing did not take into account the multitude of factors impacting scores on standardized tests. Madaus and Russell (2010/2011) point out four attributes that impacted standardized test results. High-stakes tests could have indeed provided information about student outcomes on the test. However, the tests did not provide important information about the obstacles that students faced when learning (e.g.,

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teacher training, class sizes, students' background). High-stakes tests also did not give consideration to how familial and cultural influences could have impacted students' performance on tests. Test design could have impacted test results as well. Accordingly, very minimal modifications (e.g., changing the order of the questions) in test design could have led to significant differences in the descriptions of student performance.

Aside from neglecting the factors that affected students' scores in standardized testing, there were also apparent negative consequences of high-stakes testing. Conflictingly, high-stakes testing could have led to the lower performing students not receiving the remediation or additional instruction they needed. Research had found that some schools actually disregarded the lowest-achieving students and focused remediation on those students whose scores were on the cusp of high-stakes testing proficiency levels (Madaus & Russell, 2010/2011). Some schools referred to these students as "bubble kids," a term derived from poker and basketball that described bubble players or teams that were just on the cusp of elimination (Rothstein, 2008). Technically, what occurred is that instead of addressing the needs of *all* low performing students, only those with scores just below the passing grade mattered; these "bubble kids," as in the case of Birch Middle School, were assigned to an additional series of classes (e.g., language arts) during the new school year with the intent of passing the test for that year. The rationale for this effort was that the school had limited resources, so they needed to realign their resources to a small group of students that would have impacted the school's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) (Castagno, 2008).

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Paradoxes of High-Stakes Testing Synthesis

A review of the literature on the paradoxes of standardized testing revealed inconsistencies in expected outcomes of the testing. A theoretical view of standardized testing as having a positive impact on student cognition was revealed (Benjamin & Pashler, 2015). The review discussed the lack of consideration for cultural influences that may impact student performance on standardized tests. A review of the literature revealed test preparation as an avenue for reducing emphasis on student learning and focusing remediation on students whose performance was close to reaching proficiency levels, while disregarding the lowest performing students (Madaus & Russell, 2010/2011; Castagno, 2008). A review of the literature on the paradoxes of high-stakes testing exposed contrasting perspectives about standardized testing.

High-Stakes Testing and Disadvantaged Students

More districts were using high-stakes test scores as determinants of grade promotion and graduation. This practice put students with disabilities, racial minority students, and linguistically diverse students at a disadvantage (Horn, 2003, p. 32). This part of the literature review examined two primary groups that had been identified to be highly disadvantaged when it came to standardized testing: students with disabilities and students with LEP.

Students with Disabilities

Historically, students with disabilities were excluded from standardized tests, thereby excluding the education of students with disabilities from the general accountability systems. It was only in 1997 that amendments made in the IDEA required the inclusion of students with

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disabilities in standardized testing (Lai & Berkeley, 2012). One rationale for including students with disabilities in statewide assessments was to prevent their educational programs from being overlooked for added resources and augmentations (Hager & Slocum, 2005).

The requirement for students with disabilities to participate in high-stakes testing was intended to ensure that evaluative data for these students led to improved teaching and learning, and at the same time ensured the acquisition of skills necessary for students with disabilities to participate in general education curricula. Ysseldyke et al. (2004) found that raising expectations for students with disabilities could have produced positive results, as raised expectations usually led to increased participation that was appropriately supported by individualized accommodations, improved instruction, and therefore improved performance.

The Center on Education Policy (2004) reported that students with disabilities had actually been making significant improvements in terms of academic performance and other related outcomes; statistics from the U.S. Department of Education (2005) showed that graduation rates with a standard diploma for students with disabilities age 14 and above had increased to 56.2 percent in 1999-2000 from only 52.6 percent in 1995-1996, whereas dropout rates for students with disabilities had decreased to 29.4 percent from 34.1 percent during the same time period. Statistics from the U.S. Department of Education (2005) had also shown that the number of students with disabilities finishing high school had increased by 17 percent, whereas postsecondary education participation for students with disabilities more than doubled to 32 percent. The number of students with disabilities having paying jobs after being out of school for up to two years had increased by 15 percent from 1987 to 2003 (Cited from Katsiyannis, Zhang, Ryan & Jones, 2007).

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Nevertheless, there were potential harmful aspects of high-stakes testing that lacked requisite validity and reliability, such as an increase in student failure and dropout rates, the distortion and dysfunction of the curriculum as instruction moved towards preparation for test-taking and negative consequences for teachers due to poor test scores over which they had little to no control (Gartland & Strosnider, 2004). Research concurred that students with disabilities were consistently outperformed by their non-disabled peers on academic assessments (Carter, Wehby, Hughes, Johnson, Plank, Barton-Arwood, & Lunsford, 2005). Students with disabilities may also have been subjected to stress and anxiety brought on by the demands of standardized testing. Equally disturbing, students who personalized their school's low achievement on test scores were likely to suffer guilt and despair over their contribution to their school's poor performance (Albrecht & Joles, 2003).

There were also exceptional groups of students with disabilities who encountered further challenges with assessments. For example, students with disabilities and limited proficiency in the English language required specialized adaptations for accurate assessments. For these students, translation to the student's native language or assessments generated in the student's native language should have been made available. These adaptations should have been in addition to any accommodations made for the student's disability. Nevertheless, despite the struggles faced by these students, the inclusion of their scores in the school's accountability encouraged schools to teach these students English quickly and effectively. Schools may have also been more apt to address these students' learning problems promptly, rather than attributing learning difficulties to simply a language barrier (Smith, 2006). Another exceptional group of students with disabilities were those who lived in rural areas. These students' access to specialized instruction and qualified teachers may have been limited in contrast to similar

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students in urban school districts (Hager & Slocum, 2005). These students may have faced isolated assessment challenges that required accommodations and adaptations necessary for accurate assessments.

According to IDEA, it was the responsibility of a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team to determine whether a student would have participated in the general assessment or an alternate assessment (New Jersey Department of Education, 2005). Students with severe cognitive impairments not receiving instruction in any of the skill areas measured by the general assessment qualified to participate in an alternative assessment. The student's IEP team determined the necessary accommodations and modifications that would have been employed if the student was to take the general assessment. Accommodations and modifications generally considered appropriate for standardized testing included altered response mode, oral administration of test, large print, Braille, separate or individualized test location, extended time, and multiple test sessions (New Jersey Department of Education, 2005).

Other accommodations and modifications may have been considered by the student's IEP team, provided that such accommodations and modifications were stated in the student's IEP and were typically available for the student in the classroom. Controversy existed concerning accommodations and modifications for standardized testing. Some believed that accommodations and modifications for physical and sensory disabilities were employed, while accommodations and modifications for cognitive or behavioral disabilities were ignored (Albrecht & Joles, 2003). A study by Lai and Berkeley (2012) examining the policies and existing research on the effectiveness of accommodations for students with disabilities during high-stakes testing found that testing accommodations that were widely used (e.g., timing,

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response, setting, equipment and materials, and presentation) did not have evidence-based backing for their effectiveness. Lai and Berkeley (2012) also found that the permissibility of accommodations varied greatly among states. The researchers concluded that there was limited existing research on the topic and that further investigation was necessary.

In terms of the content and format of alternate assessments for the state, there were federal regulations in place and a balance between standardization and individualization was vital for an accurate assessment: standardization for scoring and interpretation of scores, and individualization for meaningful results. According to Hager and Slocum (2005), portfolios of students' work allowed for a great degree of individualization. However, standardization of such portfolios presented as a challenge for the state departments of education that scored the portfolios. At the time of this study, 23 states, including New Jersey, used portfolios as alternate assessments. As compelled by the NCLB and IDEA, all students in New Jersey participated in state assessments: either the general standardized test or the Alternate Proficiency Assessment (APA). According to the New Jersey Department of Education (2005), an APA portfolio was "a collection of student work and educational information that related to a student's progress on the New Jersey content standards." Content areas covered by these assessments included Language Arts Literacy and Mathematics in grades three, five, six, and seven, and Language Arts Literacy, Mathematics, and Science in grades four and eight. Over a four-month period, teachers collected samples and data evidencing a student's progress towards the stated goals and targeted skills. The portfolio was then submitted to the New Jersey Department of Education to be scored and included in the school district's assessment results for accountability for state and federal reports (New Jersey Department of Education, 2005). Exceptions from the mandated testing included students who attended private schools not receiving public funding and students who were

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homeschooled by their parents or guardians. Students who received home instruction provided by their school districts, on the other hand, were required to participate in state assessments (New Jersey Department of Education, 2005).

Beginning in 2015, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers PARCC assessment (PARCC) was the general standardized assessment in New Jersey, and was administered in grades three through eight and grade eleven. Previously, the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJASK) was administered only in grades three, four, and eight, and a similar assessment known as the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) was given in grade eleven; the NJASK was later expanded to include administration in grades three through eight and grade eleven. The expansion of the NJASK was dictated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

For students with mild disabilities taking state and district tests, Conderman and Pedersen (2010) recommended that teachers should prepare ahead. They should have analyzed the environmental factors that affected students' test performance (e.g., setting, room temperature, materials, noise, etc.) to ensure that the students were comfortable and could not be easily distracted. Additionally, appropriate accommodations should have been planned beforehand. It was also suggested that test conditions should be simulated and that students should practice every now and then to ensure their maximum potential when taking the tests (Conderman & Pedersen, 2010).

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Students with Limited English Proficiency

Despite the challenges faced by students classified as English Language Learners (ELL), also known as students with LEP, regulations governing standardized assessments required that such students were included in high-stakes testing. Like student with disabilities, LEP students were also disadvantaged when it came to standardized testing. Studies such as Giambo (2010), Ruecker (2013), and Solorzano (2008) had confirmed that students with LEP scored below grade expectancy. What was worse was that some of these students were mistaken as having disabilities and placed into special education programs (Solorzano, 2008). Nevertheless, one positive note on standardized testing and LEP students was that it provided additional funding for supplementary educational services (SES), which had been highlighted to have significant positive effects on academic achievement among low-performing students if implemented well (Ruecker, 2013).

Issues concerning LEP and standardized testing had specifically focused on testing use for determining academic achievement and language proficiency such as norming, validity, and technical quality, as well as on fairness concerning validity, opportunity to learn, and inclusion through accommodations. According to Solorzano (2008), for students with LEP, there were technical issues related to norming and validity when it came to defining the purpose and identifying the intended participants of achievement tests. This was further aggravated by the varying definitions of English proficiency when it came to the language proficiency tests. Lastly, there was the issue of fairness and bias, because LEP students may have been held in remedial English language proficiency classes with little opportunity to learn the content and skills needed to perform well on tests. When taken together, these issues were compounded into a system-

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wide barrier to learning and educational progress that limited the students' opportunities and thereby added further risks for widening the achievement gap between students with LEP and the rest of the student population. LEP students may have continued to be undereducated and grew up as adults with lower paying jobs, increasing their vulnerability to all the negative consequences of being marginalized (Solorzano, 2008).

It should be highlighted that similar to students with disabilities, LEP students enjoyed certain testing accommodations to ensure that they could have performed well given their limited English proficiency. For LEP students, accommodations were permitted in the form of presentation, wherein students were given the opportunity to have the test administered, explained, repeated, or translated into their native languages by an ESL/bilingual specialist; response, wherein the student could have dictated his or her answers in his or her native language; setting, wherein the test was administered in a separate location, individually or with a small group; and timing/scheduling, wherein students were given extra time or breaks during administration (Solorzano, 2008).

While the intention was good, the accommodations were not perfect and LEP students may have still struggled with standardized tests even with the accommodations. For example, Solano-Flores and Li (2008) argued that each LEP student had unique strengths and weaknesses in each language mode (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Solano-Flores and Li (2008) found that many LEP students varied in their proficiency levels in each language mode in English and in their native languages due to factors like schooling experience and migration history. Each test item also posed varying sets of linguistic demands that could not have easily been translated to another language. If the test items were then translated to the student's native

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language, there was a risk of changing the meaning of the item, thereby creating confusion on the student's part. Test scorers may have also had different abilities when it came to interpreting the students' responses, thereby affecting the student's scores (Solano-Flores & Li, 2008). Stansfield (2011) also noted that written test translations were not always feasible for some states and districts due to a variety of reasons such as limited financial resources, lack of student literacy in the native language, and the limited number of native speakers of the language in the LEP population.

High-Stakes Testing and Disadvantaged Students Synthesis

A review of the literature on high-stakes testing and disadvantaged students defined disadvantaged students as students with disabilities and LEP students (Horn, 2003). The rationale for including students with disabilities in standardized testing was to ensure that programs for these students were not overlooked for improvements (Hager & Slocum, 2005). The review of the literature proposed that including LEP students in standardized testing may have led schools to address these students' learning issues more expediently (Smith, 2006). Theoretical research suggested that students with disabilities may experience more test related stress and anxiety than non-disabled students (Albrecht & Joles, 2003). The need for further research on the effectiveness and availability of accommodations for students with disabilities as well as LEP students on standardized tests was expressed (Lai & Berkeley, 2012). A review of the literature on standardized testing and disadvantaged students provided foundational information about the purposes and effects of standardized testing for students with disabilities and LEP students.

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Perspectives on High-Stakes Testing

Parents' Perspectives

In general, there appeared to be minimal research regarding parents' views on standardized testing. It had been found, though, that parents were involved and were very interested in their child's performance on standardized tests (Osburn et al., 2004; Mulvenon et al., 2005). Parents had also indicated their acknowledgement that standardized testing was significantly important (Osburn et al., 2004). This finding was in alignment with Mulvenon et al.'s (2005) findings wherein surveyed parents also felt that standardized testing was important. Mulvenon et al. (2005) further found that parents of low-performing students felt pressured to perform well on examinations. This suggests that parents saw the relevance of standardized testing and they felt compelled to help their children perform better.

Nevertheless, both studies by Osburn et al. (2004) and Mulvenon et al. (2004) confirmed that parents felt inadequately advised of their children's performance on standardized testing; at the same time, parents were also not receiving sufficient explanation of how to interpret test results. In Osburn et al.'s (2005) study, parents reported that they received little to no explanation of their children's standardized test scores. This study also examined how anxious the respondents felt about standardized testing, and how anxious they believed their children felt about the testing. The results indicated that the parents themselves did not feel markedly anxious about the testing, nor did they believe their children felt excessively anxious (Osburn et al., 2005).

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Teacher Perspectives

While much had been written about teachers' perspectives on standardized testing, there seemed to be a dearth of articles on peer-reviewed journals in the 2000s on the topic that specifically addressed the US educational system. According to Berry, Daughtrey, & Weider (2010), while teachers agreed that student performance was an important element in their evaluations, they expressed concerns on standardized tests as the best way to measure student learning. The teachers also shared that they were disheartened about the overemphasis on standardized tests as the primary basis for assessing their effectiveness as teachers, as well as the effectiveness of their schools (Berry et al., 2010).

In an interview report collaborated on by former colleagues Edwards and Pula (2011), Edwards, who was also a former teacher, questioned the high levels of pressure at her school, when in fact the school was "a well-run, relatively well-funded school with many outstanding teachers and plenty of volunteer help from the community" (p. 13). Edwards added that "the NCLB, with the demands for AYP, was truly driving the members of the community mad, or at the very least, causing them to become focused on one test... A single score could not possibly measure a school's effectiveness, yet schools' funding and reputations rested on test results, perhaps because scores were easy for voters to understand" (Edwards & Pula, 2011, p. 12-13). Edwards did note, however, that if there was one positive outcome from the pressures of AYP, it would have been the hiring of a literary coach and a math coach for the following year, which otherwise might not have received funding approval from the local board of education (Edwards & Pula, 2011).

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Novice teachers in New York City also expressed their sentiments, this time on the effect of standardized testing, which included the curricular and pedagogical impositions of scripted lessons and mandated curriculum (Crocco & Costigan, 2007). With the very limited freedom they had in terms of what and how to teach their students, new teachers felt that they were not growing personally and professionally. They expressed concern that the new programs hindered their identity development, as well as undermined their creativity and autonomy, and cut short their ability to establish meaningful relationships with their students. Teachers also expressed a mixture of frustration and anger, as well as determination, resistance, and resilience (Crocco & Costigan, 2007).

Science teachers expressed negativity towards standardized testing. In Aydeniz and Southerland's (2012) study involving 161 American high school and middle school science teachers, they found that only 20.5 percent (n=33) of the participants agreed that standardized tests would have improved student learning, whereas 19 percent (n=31) held a neutral view, and 60.5 percent (n=97) did not believe it would have improved student learning. Those in favor of standardized testing reasoned that the accountability policy of standardized testing would have encouraged teachers to strictly adhere to the state-mandated curriculum standards in an effective manner. Teachers who were not in favor indicated that the pressure brought about by the policy encouraged them to regulate the content of the subjects they taught and limited them according to the content of the test, which was more focused on factual knowledge than developing critical thinking and inquiry skills. The researchers also found that because of the standardized testing, the majority of teachers (93%; n=150) also made significant changes in their assessments, using more multiple-choice type assessments and less meaningful project-based assessments (Aydeniz & Southerland, 2012).

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Children's Perspectives

Student perspectives were crucial to the understanding and improvement of education such that “what mattered in schools was centered on students, their daily actions, and interactions, and how they made sense of their lives” (Theissen, 2007 as cited in Dutro & Selland, 2012, p. 345). In the study by Dutro and Selland (2012) on high-stakes testing and the perspectives of fourth grade students from an urban, high-poverty school, the researchers found that students understood that the tests significantly mattered due to the heavy consequences that results had for their school, teachers, and their own school experiences. However, the students' responses also exposed some misinterpretations about the associations among testing, their individual and collective experiences, and the consequences of their performance (Dutro & Selland, 2012).

One interesting finding in the same study was the number of children who equated a failing score on the high-stakes tests with grade retention, when this was not the case in their school district. This meant that while students were aware of the relevance of high-stakes tests, there were some misconceptions. Dutro and Selland (2012) emphasized that students deserved and needed clarity and transparency about the purpose of the tests that they were taking, especially when tests scores did not lead to punitive consequences for individual students. As Dutro and Selland (2012) noted, it was simply not right and fair for children to carry the dread of an unreal consequence, especially when there were adults who could have eliminated those fears and made learning a pleasant experience.

Another negative consequence of high-stakes testing was the test anxiety that it brought to students. According to Zeidner (1998), test anxiety was the “phenomenological, physiological,

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and behavioral reactions that occurred in association with concern about the negative outcomes resulting from failure or poor performance in evaluative situations” (Cited from Segool, Carlson, Goforth, Von der Embse, & Barterian, 2013, p. 489). As students were subjected to greater expectations for high-stakes testing, there was opportunity for greater test anxiety, which potentially led to the impairment of student performance (Colwell, 2013). In a study by Connor (2003), test anxiety had been demonstrated even in children as young as seven years old (Cited in Von der Embse & Hasson, 2012). Symptoms of test anxiety could have included being tearful and constantly seeking attention and reassurance (Von der Embse & Hasson, 2012).

In Von der Embse and Hasson’s (2012) study on test anxiety among urban and suburban tenth grade students, the researchers hypothesized that students in the urban school would demonstrate greater levels of test anxiety than students in the suburban schools. The researchers based this hypothesis on the fact that the urban school district consistently produced subpar test scores and was not meeting the AYP requirement. Nevertheless, this hypothesis was not sustained by the test results. In the same study, Von der Embse and Hasson (2012) also hypothesized that students with higher levels of test anxiety, as measured by the Friedben Test Anxiety Scale (FTAS), would have lower scores on the achievement test, as measured by the Ohio Graduation Test (OGT); this hypothesis was supported in both the urban and suburban schools (Von der Embse & Hasson, 2012). Segool et al. (2013), on the other hand, found that elementary students from grades three to five reported significantly higher overall test anxiety in relation to high-stakes testing compared to ordinary classroom testing. However, both studies had some limitations, including the small sample size and lack of academic achievement factors being part of the subject groups. Future research studies in this area could have aided schools in

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identifying and assisting students prone to test anxiety, which may have in turn elicited better scores on standardized testing.

High-Stakes Testing and School Administrators

The roles of school administrators included many obligations in maximizing student achievement and increasing school effectiveness. Some districts relied on students' standardized test results as a principal measure of teachers' effectiveness. This method was quite restrictive, focusing on only one aspect of student achievement and ignoring other avenues of assessment for both students and teachers. Nevertheless, accountability in education was necessary and data from standardized tests could have provided valuable information for placement decisions. However, accountability could not have taken precedence over the ultimate goal of education, which was preparing students to be independent thinkers, self-advocates, and humanitarians. Changes in legislation such as NCLB as well as political motives had put undue pressure on school systems to prove their worth via students' standardized achievement scores, thereby compelling school leaders to take high-stakes testing into account when determining teacher effectiveness.

School administrators may have felt pressured to revamp school schedules to allow for additional hours of "test prep," often eliminating time previously allotted for elective classes, field trips, activities, and education in non-tested areas (Meier, Kohn, Darling-Hammond, Sizer, & Wood, 2004). All of this "test prep" may have led not only to a decrease in the versatility of instruction, but a decrease in time and resources allotted for the neediest students, those of

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cultural and linguistic diversity, students with disabilities, and students in need of instructional remediation.

Nevertheless, as Stauffer & Mason (2013) noted, school administrators may have been in the best position to address the political and educational structures. As school administrators, they could have served as liaisons or mediators between their respective schools and the district offices. There, they could have advocated for greater support and/or resources from district offices, and at the same time made the teachers understand the expectations and demands of the district offices, and empathized with them to gain organizational commitment. Stauffer & Mason (2013) suggested incorporating teachers in the decision-making process. With the limited autonomy that teachers may have had in the curriculum, this shared decision-making process may have offset any ill will that they may have had towards district offices.

Perspectives on High Stakes Testing Synthesis

A review of the literature exposed the minimal research available regarding parents' views on standardized testing. The review of the literature revealed that parents did not feel adequately informed about their children's performance on standardized testing or how to interpret standardized testing scores (Osburn et al., 2004/2005 and Mulvenon et al., 2004). Contrasting teacher perspectives ranged from discontent about the instructional impact and accountability measures of standardized testing to appreciation for greater resource allotment for literacy and mathematics to improve students' scores on standardized tests. A review of the literature on children's perspectives disclosed students' uncertainty about use of the test scores and concerns about test anxiety. The literature reviewed on school administrators revealed standardized testing's effects on school schedules, classroom instruction, and allotment of school resources.

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Synthesis of Literature Review

The literature review included both theoretical and empirical research on standardized testing. This literature review was intended to present research that covers the spectrum of standardized testing from history through contemporary outcomes and expectations. The review of the literature presented viewpoints on the impact of standardized testing on curriculum, instruction, school accountability measures, and school administration. The review provided outlooks on standardized testing and students with disabilities and LEP students. The perspectives of parents, students, and teachers were included. A review of the literature revealed the notably limited research on parents' perspectives on standardized testing. The literature review disclosed the absence of research on the perspectives regarding standardized testing of parents for whom English is not their first language. This research study sought to unveil the perspectives of LEP parents towards standardized testing. Chapter 1 revealed the significance of the need for this study as an avenue to ensuring parental understanding of students' standardized assessment results. The research methodology, survey design, population and sample, and data analysis are detailed in Chapter 3.

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Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This study was an investigation of the general knowledge and attitudes of parents of Spanish-speaking LEP students towards standardized testing programs in their children's schools. The data for this quantitative study were collected through a closed-ended questionnaire distributed in SurveyMonkey through email to the target audience of Spanish-speaking parents in a suburban school district in New Jersey. Permission to use the questions in the study conducted by Osburn, Stegman, Suitt, & Ritter (2004) was obtained (See Appendix B).

Design Appropriateness

The original study conducted by Osburn et al., (2004) was designed as a quantitative correlational study seeking to understand whether relationships existed between parental perceptions of standardized tests and their children's actual scores on the SAT9 in a high-achieving school district in Arkansas. This current study did not seek to identify or understand relationships between parental views and student scores, and utilized a descriptive quantitative design.

The study's purpose was different than that of Osburn et al., (2004). The researcher's interest stemmed from concern regarding how Spanish-speaking parents in a large school district knew or understood the standardized testing system that their children were required to participate in each year.

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Instrumentation

The 19-question survey (Osburn et al., 2004) was translated into Spanish to eliminate any language barriers. *Parent Survey of Standardized Achievement Tests* was therefore adapted to the needs of Spanish-speaking parents. The survey design had been selected due to its efficiency and cost-effectiveness in gathering the information specifically needed for this study.

The Population and Sample

The population were Spanish-speaking parents of LEP students being educated in their non-native language environment, yet they were required to participate in New Jersey's standardized testing program. Every parent of the Spanish-speaking LEP students in the relevant grade levels in the school district had an equal chance to complete the survey.

Research Questions

The following four research questions drove the study:

RQ. 1. How do Spanish-speaking parents of ESL children describe school communication on their child's standardized testing?

RQ. 2. How do Spanish-speaking parents of ESL children describe their involvement and interest in their child's standardized testing?

RQ. 3. How do Spanish-speaking parents of ESL children view the testing climate at their child's school?

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RQ. 4. How do Spanish-speaking parents of ESL students perceive the overall stress associated with standardized testing at their children's school?

Data Analytic Procedures

The respondents for this study included the Spanish-speaking parents of LEP students from the fourth through twelfth grade classes in a suburban school district in New Jersey. For this study, the target number of respondents was 100. All Spanish-speaking parents of the LEP students in the relevant grade levels in the school district for whom the district had a valid email address were solicited to participate in the study, and were given an equal opportunity to complete the survey and share their perceptions. The target number of 100 was not met; 32 parents responded.

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics allowed the researcher to present, describe, and summarize the data in a meaningful way upon the emergence of patterns in the responses. Findings are presented in Chapter 4, followed by a discussion of the findings in Chapter 5.

Ethical Considerations

To ensure that this study maintained ethical standards, all Seton Hall University and Human Subjects Protections were in place. Upon approval to begin the study, several documents had to be secured. In addition to gaining permission from the survey writers (Osburn et al., 2004) to use their survey in a replication study, permission to attain the emails of the target population was also procured from the school district. To protect the identity and rights of the participants, the following were included as part of the SurveyMonkey process:

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1. Letter of Solicitation (See Appendix C): In the Letter of Solicitation, the researcher provided the respondents with information about the research, including its content, purpose, and potential risks and benefits. Respondents were also informed about the duration of the survey and their rights in answering the survey, such as the refusal to answer specific questions in the survey and the refusal to continue participating in the study at any point.
2. Confidentiality and Anonymity: Respondents were assured that their answers, identity, and participation in the study were kept fully confidential and anonymous. To do so meant that the researcher did not include or link any identifiers (e.g., name, address, telephone numbers, etc.) to the survey responses in the presentation and analysis of data.

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Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to examine how parents of students with LEP for whom Spanish was the primary language perceived standardized testing. The results presented in this chapter were based on the participants' responses to the questionnaire *Parent Survey of Standardized Achievement Tests* (Osburn et al., 2004), which was made available through SurveyMonkey via the participants' email addresses.

The survey was sent to 223 parents through their private email addresses in one school district in New Jersey; 32 of the 223 parents responded. The first question in the survey was embedded in the email and was written in both English and Spanish: *The standardized testing program is important for the educational progress of my child/ El programa de pruebas estandarizadas es importante para el progreso educativo de mi hijo/a*. This feature allowed parents to see the first question of the survey and to be led to the full survey upon answering the first question.

The survey was used in its entirety, without alterations, with permission from the original authors (Osburn et al., 2004). To eliminate any language barrier, the survey questions were provided in both English and Spanish. The survey included 19 questions; parents rated their responses on a five-point Likert-type scale: (1) not at all; (2) some; (3) moderate amount; (4) significant amount; and (5) extreme amount. In accordance with the model set forth by Osburn et al. (2004), the responses were categorized into three key categories: 1) Parent Involvement and Interest in Testing; 2) Testing Climate; and 3) Overall Stress and Anxiety.

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A fourth theme on Communication was added. The four research questions corresponded to the testing categories.

RQ. 1. How do Spanish-speaking parents of LEP children describe school communication on their child's standardized testing?

RQ. 2. How do Spanish-speaking parents of LEP children describe their involvement and interest in their child's standardized testing?

RQ. 3. How do Spanish-speaking parents of LEP children view the testing climate at their child's school?

RQ. 4. How do Spanish-speaking parents of LEP students perceive the overall stress associated with standardized testing at their children's school?

Data Analysis Process

In the original work of Osburn et al. (2004), only 12 of the 19 questions were used in the correlational analysis. The remaining seven questions were not used in the scoring of data. In the current limited study, the 12 questions used by the original authors (Osburn et al., 2004) in the correlational analysis were used to replicate the three categories of the original study to analyze parental involvement and interest in standardized testing; parental perception of the testing climate; and parental views on overall stress and anxiety related to standardized testing. Two additional questions were used in the current limited study to formulate a response for the first research question on how parents perceived communication from the school. Five questions were not part of the data analysis of this study; they were not deemed relevant to analyzing one of the four research questions, and were discarded from the calculations.

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Findings

The findings for each of the four research questions were explained individually and include the survey questions that were used to respond to each research question. At the end of the two-week window of time for responses, the study was closed. The raw data calculations provided by SurveyMonkey were presented in 19 tables (See Appendix D): one for each question parents responded to, with Likert-like scales (See Table 1 for raw data for survey question number one).

Table 1	
<i>Raw Data for Survey Question Number One</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe the Standardized Testing Program is Important</i>
6.25%	Not at all
12.50%	Some
18.75%	Moderate
37.50%	Significant
25.00%	Extreme

Step 1: An initial question was asked, to which 32 of the 223 potential respondents replied. This initial question was embedded into the solicitation email with the intent of promoting parents' interest in continuing the survey. The responses to the initial question were calculated into the data analysis for RQ. 2.

Step 2: The five Likert-like scales were reduced to three scales for ease in descriptive interpretation (See Figure 1).

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SCALE 1 <i>NOT AT ALL</i>		
	SCALE 2 <i>SOME OR MODERATE</i>	
		SCALE 3 <i>SIGNIFICANTLY OR EXTREMELY</i>

Figure 1: Likert-like scale clusters

Step 3: Clustering of the questions for each of the four research questions was initiated and calculated by the researcher from the raw data from SurveyMonkey.

Step 4: Response rates for each of the research questions are displayed in separate figures that indicate the number of responses in each of the three scale categories (Step 2). The response clusters for each question are clarified by listing the actual questions used from the survey as response categories. For the purpose of establishing validity and reliability between the current study data and the Osborn et al. study (2004), the same questions were used to describe the data for each category emulated in this study.

Step 5: Calculating the average responses for each question was accomplished in three steps. The calculations for RQ 1 will be described to illustrate how the process took place. Two questions were assessed (6 and 7).

- a) The percentage of responses for the scale reading of NOT AT ALL were added for both question questions 6 and 7.

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- b) 34.62% for question 6 NOT AT ALL was added to 70.37% for question 7 NOT AT ALL.
- c) Combined NOT AT ALL response rate was 104.99 divided by 2 (questions) equaled 52%.
- d) Scale clusters (step 2) combined SOME and MODERATE scores for each of the two survey questions. Responses were 50%, 15.38%, and 29.63% which added up to 95.01 and was divided by 2 (two questions).
- e) Percentage of responses for the scale cluster of SOME or MODERATE was calculated to be 47%.
- f) Table 2 is a visual representation of these calculations.

Research Questions and Findings

RQ. 1. How do Spanish-speaking parents of LEP children describe school communication on their child's standardized testing? To answer RQ. 1 the following two questions were calculated:

Question 6: I have had the results of my child's test explained to me by a teacher.

Question 7: I have had the results of my child's test explained to me by a counselor.

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Table 2	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Have Had the Results of Their Child's Standardized Test Explained to Them by a Teacher or School Counselor</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Had Test Results Explained to Them</i>
52.50%	Not at all
47.50%	Some or moderate
0.00%	Significant or extreme

52% indicated they were not engaged in school-based communication regarding their child's standardized testing, while 47.5% indicated some or moderate communication took place. No parents indicated significant involvement in the testing communication between home and school. The responses for the questions included in this category, survey questions 6 and 7, were clustered according to the 3 scales: NOT AT ALL, SOME and MODERATE, and SIGNIFICANTLY and EXTREMELY. The scale percentages were added and divided by the number of questions included in the cluster.

RQ. 2. How do Spanish-speaking parents of LEP children describe their involvement and interest in their child's standardized testing? To analyze the parents' involvement and interest in their child's test, 4 of the 19 questions were used and the results are presented in Table 3.

Question 1: The standardized testing program is important for the educational progress of my child.

Question 9: I am interested in the results of my child's test.

Question 10: I believe that standardized testing is a waste of time.

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Question 15: I believe that parents have a responsibility to work with their children to improve their performance on standardized tests.

Table 3 <i>Percentages of Parents Who Feel Involved or Interested in Their Child's Standardized Testing</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Feel Involved or Interested in their Child's Standardized Testing</i>
20.08%	Not at all
34.66%	Some or moderate
45.25%	Significant or extreme

Note here that although no parents felt school to home communication on standardized testing was evidenced, the parent responses to how they describe their own involvement and interest in their child's testing bore evidence of their interest in to some degree. 20% did indicate they were not interested. While 35% showed some or moderate interest, another 45% indicated they were significantly or extremely interested.

RQ. 3. How do Spanish-speaking parents of LEP children view the testing climate at their child's school? Four questions were used to assess the overall parental view of the testing climate in their children's school. The four questions used were from the testing climate category of questions from The *Parent Survey of Standardized Achievement Tests*, and the results are presented in Table 4.

Question 8: The climate surrounding testing in this school is healthy.

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Question 11: I think the teachers genuinely want my child to do well on the test.

Question 18: The principal works hard to help make the testing week as pleasant as possible for the students.

Question 19: The principal works hard to help make the testing week a positive experience for the students.

Table 4 <i>Percentages of Parents Who View the Testing Climate as Healthy, Pleasant, and Positive for Their Child</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who View the Testing Climate as Positive</i>
2.78%	Not at all
62.96%	Some or moderate
34.26%	Significant or extreme

Nearly three percent of the parents did not perceive the testing climate as healthy or supportive. 63% perceived the climate to be somewhat or moderately healthy and supportive. 34% viewed the school climate as significantly healthy or supportive.

RQ. 4. How do Spanish-speaking parents of ESL students perceive the overall stress associated with standardized testing at their children's school? Four questions were used to understand how parents perceive the overall stress and pressure produced by the testing environment in their children's schools and the results are presented in Table 5.

Question 2: The standardized testing program is stressful for my child.

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Question 3: The standardized testing program is stressful for teachers.

Question 4: Teachers seem threatened by the testing program.

Question 5: I feel pressure to help my child score well on standardized tests.

Table 5 <i>Percentages of Students Who Experience Stress and Anxiety Over Standardized Tests as Noted by Their Parents</i>	
Percentage	<i>Amount of Stress and Anxiety</i>
34.44%	Not at all
54.38%	Some or moderate
11.18%	Significant or extreme

While 34% of parents perceived the testing program to have no association with stress or anxiety, 55% intuited that somewhat or moderate stress existed. Another 11% felt a significant or extreme level of stress and anxiety existed.

Summary of Findings

This limited study was initiated because literature about parental perspectives and understanding of the meaning and purpose of standardized testing appeared minimal, in particular among the Spanish-speaking population. The researcher sought to examine the perspectives of parents of LEP students regarding standardized testing. An email survey was sent to 223 potential respondents; 32 completed the survey. The respondents indicated their closed responses via five possible answers. The foremost findings of this study convey that

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parents do not feel adequately informed about how their children perform on standardized testing. The majority of respondents indicated a lack of home-school communication regarding their children's scores on standardized testing. The parents of LEP students viewed the standardized testing as important and were interested in how their children performed but felt uninformed. The parents regarded preparation of children for standardized testing as a shared duty and expressed the idea that parents and teachers were responsible for helping students improve their performance on the tests. Respondents believed that teachers genuinely wanted their children to perform well on standardized tests. The testing climate was regarded as somewhat or moderately healthy by the majority of parents, though most parents also viewed the testing as somewhat or moderately stressful.

Chapter 5

Discussion

Overview

This study was conducted to examine the perceptions of parents of Spanish-speaking students with LEP towards standardized testing. The research was guided by the following questions:

RQ. 1. How do Spanish-speaking parents of LEP children describe school communication on their child's standardized testing?

RQ. 2. How do Spanish-speaking parents of LEP children describe their involvement and interest in their child's standardized testing?

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RQ. 3. How do Spanish-speaking parents of LEP children view the testing climate at their child's school?

RQ. 4. How do Spanish-speaking parents of LEP students perceive the overall stress associated with standardized testing at their children's school?

Respondents shared their perspectives by means of a questionnaire, *Parent Survey of Standardized Achievement Tests* (Osburn et al., 2004) via SurveyMonkey. This survey questionnaire was used with permission of the authors. The survey was translated and presented in English and Spanish to eliminate any language barrier. The survey included 19 questions; responses were rated on a five-point Likert-type scale. Parents' responses were categorized into four key themes: Parent Involvement and Interest in Testing; Testing Climate; Overall Stress and Anxiety; and Communication.

Summary of Findings

This limited study was initiated because literature about parental perspectives and understanding of the meaning and purpose of standardized testing appeared minimal, among the Spanish-speaking population. The researcher sought to examine the perspectives of parents of LEP students regarding standardized testing. An email survey was sent to 223 potential respondents; 32 completed the survey. The respondents indicated their closed responses via five possible answers. The foremost findings of this study convey that parents do not feel adequately informed about how their children perform on standardized testing. The majority of respondents indicated a lack of home-school communication regarding their children's scores on standardized testing. The parents of LEP students viewed the

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standardized testing as important and were interested in how their children performed but felt uninformed. The parents regarded the preparation of children for standardized testing as a shared duty and expressed the idea that parents and teachers were responsible for helping students improve their performance on the tests. Respondents believed that teachers genuinely wanted their children to perform well on standardized tests. The testing climate was regarded as somewhat or moderately healthy by the majority of parents, though most parents viewed the testing as somewhat or moderately stressful.

Implications

Parental involvement, defined as “the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities” (Department of Education, 2004), had been included in regulations governing education, including No Child Left Behind, The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and Every Child Succeeds Act. One way that schools can convey to parents the importance of “...two-way, and meaningful communication...” is to ensure that parents understand the purposes, uses, and results of their children’s standardized tests. The implications of the findings of this study support the findings of Mulvenon et al. (2005) and Osburn et al. (2004) in suggesting that improvement was needed in the communication of standardized test results to parents of students. This study expanded that finding with parents of students with LEP. The findings of the study indicated that stress was not perceived as a major concern by parents, either stress on children or on the teacher. School principals may have been creating healthy testing environments that were pleasant and positive for students and staff members. Parents acknowledged the importance of standardized testing and

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recognized their role in working with their children to help them improve their performance on standardized testing.

Limitations of Study

There were several limitations to this study. Respondents to this study were sought from only one suburban school district in New Jersey. Less than the number of targeted respondents was reached. The survey was administered solely via email, thus limiting the respondents to parents with valid email addresses who were able to receive and access the survey. The study was restricted to parents of Spanish-speaking students with LEP. The perspectives of parents of students with LEP whose native language is other than Spanish were not considered. The survey instrument included only closed response options. The low return rate for the survey disallows the option of generalizing the results beyond this study.

Suggestions for Practices and Policies

The findings of this study suggested several changes to practices and policies in schools with regard to standardized testing. To better assist parents in understanding the purposes and interpretation of their children's standardized test scores, schools would do well to work towards removing all barriers to successful parent school communication.

Suggestions for Practices

Improvement to the methods of communicating the results of standardized testing to parents is suggested. The practice of schools providing teachers and counselors with time to conference with parents about their children's standardized testing is advocated. Schools may capitalize on

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parents' perspective as taking responsibility for helping their children do well on standardized testing by providing parents with preparation on how to do so. Parent training opportunities and workshops to communicate information about standardized testing, both before and after the testing, may prove beneficial. Paying particular attention to improving school-family communication with parents for whom English is not the native language is advocated. Schools should strive for parent involvement from the start of each school year. Schools should provide parents with an academic calendar at the beginning of each school year that includes information about testing dates, curricula included on tests, expectations of the students about the testing, and dates when parents can expect to have test results communicated to them. Schools may structure information evenings to keep parents informed about state and local regulations regarding standardized testing. Parents should be aware of the testing accommodations available to their children and may provide valuable input into how their children may best perform on standardized tests. Many parents do not have access to evening childcare. When schools provide onsite childcare for evening information sessions and presentations, they are likely to increase parental interest and attendance. Schools must increase their own knowledge and understanding of the cultures of the families within their communities. Such awareness would allow staff members to communicate with parents in ways that respect cultural differences and avoid the possibility of offending families. Greater understanding of parents' views may support school administrators and staff members in engaging and communicating with parents of students with LEP.

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Suggestions for Policies

Federal and state regulations guide schools with policies on sharing results of standardized testing with parents. In the state of New Jersey, no policy currently exists to require schools to provide parents with the results of standardized testing in the parents' primary language. This lack of policy may be due to the lack of staff members available to provide interpretation and translation and may also be due to costs associated with interpretation and translation. Despite the fiscal considerations, providing parents with information in their native language may lead to greater understanding of the information and greater interest in participating in their children's education. Policies do exist that require schools to communicate with parents and to plan activities to engage families in children's education. This study yields suggestion for schools to develop policies to directly engage parents in standardized testing. Communicating the purpose and results of children's standardized testing may increase parents' understanding of regulations imposing standardized testing on students, including students for whom English is not their first language. The growing resistance to standardized testing by parents who alert schools that their children will not participate in standardized testing may be lessened by greater home-school communication. The expansion of technology use in schools has great options for increasing parental participation and involvement. Designing policies that allow parent meetings and information sessions to be broadcast via internet videoconferencing is a means of including parents who may be limited in the opportunity to attend in person. Schools should be more amenable and flexible in making staff members more available outside of standard school hours.

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Concluding Comments

For students with LEP whose parents may lack familiarity with the English language, the need for effective communication may be even greater. As schools continue to rely on standardized testing for assessing students' academic skills, as well as accountability for teachers and schools, the use of standardized testing may increase. Proficient scores on standardized assessments are currently required for graduation in many high schools, entrance to many colleges, and enrollment in many post-secondary trade schools. As the widespread use of standardized testing expands, the communication of purpose and results must keep pace. Similarly, as students from diverse backgrounds enroll in schools, and bilingual and LEP programs expand, ensuring that the parents of these students have equal opportunity to participate and understand their child's standardized assessments is paramount.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Hello. My name is Michele Tiedemann and I am currently conducting a survey for my dissertation, which is a requirement of the doctorate degree I am pursuing in the College of Education and Human Services at Seton Hall University. The purpose of this survey is to identify parents’/guardians’ understanding and views regarding standardized testing. Your honest responses to this questionnaire may help to improve the schools’ efforts in informing parents and guardians about standardized testing. Your participation is completely voluntary. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential. All survey participants will remain anonymous. Online responses and results will be maintained on a secure website, SurveyMonkey, and transferred to a USB memory stick. The survey will take less than 10 minutes to complete. Thank you very much for your valuable time and participation.

Parent Survey of Standardized Achievement Tests							
		Not at all	Some	Moderate amount	Significant amount	Extreme amount	Total
1	The standardized testing program is important for the educational progress of my child.						
2	The standardized testing program is stressful for my child.						
3	The standardized testing program is stressful for teachers.						

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		Not at all	Some	Moderate amount	Significant amount	Extreme amount	Total
4	Teachers seem threatened by the testing program.						
5	I feel pressure to help my child score well on standardized tests.						
6	I have had the results of my child's test explained to me by a teacher.						
7	I have had the results of my child's test explained to me by a counselor.						
8	The climate surrounding testing in this school is healthy.						
9	I am interested in the results of my child's tests.						
10	I believe that standardized testing is a waste of time.						

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS
STANDARDIZED TESTING

		Not at all	Some	Moderate amount	Significant amount	Extreme amount	Total
11	I think the teachers genuinely want my child to do well on the test.						
12	I think the teachers are concerned about the test results impacting their job security.						
13	I think teachers are concerned about the pressure that could be placed on them by the principal if their classes' test						
14	I believe the teacher is responsible for working with my child to improve his/her performance on standardized tests.						
15	I believe that parents have a responsibility to work with their children to improve their performance on standardized tests.						

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		Not at all	Some	Moderate amount	Significant amount	Extreme amount	Total
16	My child likes the testing week because he/she has less homework and less instruction in the class.						
17	My child tries to do well on the tests.						
18	The principal works hard to help make the testing week as pleasant as possible for the students.						
19	The principal works hard to help make the testing week a positive experience for the students.						

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS STANDARDIZED TESTING

CUESTIONARIO

Hola. Mi nombre es Michele Tiedemann y actualmente estoy realizando una encuesta para mi disertación, que es un requisito del grado de doctorado que estoy persiguiendo en la Escuela de Educación y Servicios Humanos en la Universidad de Seton Hall. El propósito de esta encuesta es identificar el entendimiento de los padres/tutores y las opiniones sobre las pruebas estandarizadas. Sus respuestas honestas para este cuestionario pueden ayudar a mejorar los esfuerzos de las escuelas para informar a los padres y tutores acerca de las pruebas estandarizadas. Su participación es completamente voluntaria. Sus respuestas serán estrictamente confidenciales. Todos los participantes del estudio permanecerán anónimos. Las respuestas en línea y los resultados se mantendrán en un sitio web seguro, Survey Monkey y se transferirán a una memoria USB. La encuesta tardará menos de 10 minutos en completarse. Muchas gracias por su valioso tiempo y participación.

Encuestas De Padres De Las Pruebas Del Logro Estandarizados							
		De ningún modo	Algunos	Cantidad moderada	Cantidad significativa	Cantidad extrema	Total
1	El programa de pruebas estandarizadas es importante para el progreso educativo de mi hijo/a.						
2	El programa estandarizado de pruebas es estresante para mi hijo/a.						

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS
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		De ningún modo	Algunos	Cantidad moderada	Cantidad significativa	Cantidad extrema	Total
3	El programa estandarizado de pruebas es estresante para los maestros.						
4	Los maestros parecen amenazados por el programa de pruebas.						
5	Siento presión para ayudar a mi hijo/a obtener buenos resultados en las pruebas estandarizadas.						
6	He tenido los resultados de la prueba de mi hijo/a explicado por un maestro.						
7	He tenido los resultados de la prueba de mi hijo/a explicado por un consejero.						
8	El clima que rodea las pruebas en esta escuela es saludable.						

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS STANDARDIZED TESTING

		De ningún modo	Algunos	Cantidad moderada	Cantidad significativa	Cantidad extrema	Total
9	Estoy interesado en los resultados de las pruebas de mi hijo/a.						
10	Creo que las pruebas estandarizadas son una pérdida de tiempo.						
11	Creo que los maestros realmente quieren que mi hijo/a haga bien en la prueba.						
12	Creo que los maestros están preocupados por los resultados de las pruebas que pueden afectar su seguridad del empleo.						
13	Creo que a los maestros les preocupa la presión que podrían tener por el director si sus clases tienen que coger una prueba.						
14	Creo que el profesor es responsable de trabajar con mi hijo para mejorar su desempeño en las pruebas estandarizadas.						

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS STANDARDIZED TESTING

		De ningún modo	Algunos	Cantidad moderada	Cantidad significativa	Cantidad extrema	Total
15	Creo que los padres tienen la responsabilidad de trabajar con sus hijos para mejorar su desempeño en las pruebas estandarizadas.						
16	A mi hijo/a le gusta la semana de pruebas porque tiene menos tarea y menos instrucción en la clase.						
17	Mi hijo/a intenta hacer bien en las pruebas.						
18	El director trabaja arduo para ayudar a que la semana de las pruebas sea lo más agradable posible para los estudiantes.						
19	El director trabaja arduo para ayudar a hacer de la semana de pruebas una experiencia positiva para los estudiantes.						

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS STANDARDIZED TESTING

APPENDIX B

Permission to Use Survey

From: Michele Tiedemann <michtied@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, May 31, 2017 at 6:42 AM
Subject: Use of survey for dissertation
To: mzosburn@ncsu.edu, cstegman@uark.edu, garvr@uark.edu

Dear Dr. Osburn, Dr. Stegman, & Dr. Ritter:

For my dissertation, I would like permission to use a survey that was published in the Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies as indicated below. I greatly appreciate your consideration of my request.

Osburn, M. Z., Stegman, C. E., Suitt, L. D., & Ritter, G. (2004). Parents' perceptions of standardized testing: Its relationship and effect on student achievement. Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies, 4(1), pp. 75-95.

Thank you very much.

Michele Tiedemann
Doctoral Candidate
Seton Hall University

From: Monica Osburn [mailto:mzosburn@ncsu.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, May 31, 2017 7:08 AM
To: Michele Tiedemann <michtied@gmail.com>
Cc: Charles E. Stegman <cstegman@uark.edu>; Gary Ritter <garvr@uark.edu>
Subject: Re: Use of survey for dissertation

Michele
I have no objections to you using the survey. Charles? Gary?
Monica

On Wed, May 31, 2017 at 6:42 AM, Michele Tiedemann <michtied@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Dr. Osburn, Dr. Stegman, & Dr. Ritter:

For my dissertation, I would like permission to use a survey that was published in the Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies as indicated below. I greatly appreciate your consideration of my request.

Osburn, M. Z., Stegman, C. E., Suitt, L. D., & Ritter, G. (2004). Parents' perceptions of standardized testing: Its relationship and effect on student achievement. Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies, 4(1), pp. 75-95.

Thank you very much.
Michele Tiedemann
Doctoral Candidate
Seton Hall University

--
Monica Z. Osburn, PhD, LPC-S
Director, Counseling Center
P: [919.515.2423](tel:919.515.2423)
Fax: [919.515.8525](tel:919.515.8525)
mzosburn@ncsu.edu

NC State University
Division of Academic and Student Affairs
Campus Box 7312
[2815 Cates Ave](http://www.ncsu.edu)
[Raleigh, NC 27695](http://www.ncsu.edu)

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS STANDARDIZED TESTING

From: Gary Ritter
Sent: Wednesday, May 31, 2017 8:27:17 AM
To: Monica Osburn; Michele Tiedemann
Cc: Charles E. Stegman
Subject: RE: Use of survey for dissertation

Hello All,

I also have no objections. I hope it is helpful for you.

Best,
Gary

PS: Monica – good to hear from you ...

----- Forwarded message -----
From: **Charles E. Stegman** <cstegman@uark.edu>
Date: Wed, May 31, 2017 at 2:07 PM
Subject: Re: Use of survey for dissertation
To: Gary Ritter <garyr@uark.edu>, Monica Osburn <mzosburn@ncsu.edu>, Michele Tiedemann <michtied@gmail.com>

It is ok with me as well. It would be good to get a copy of the results after the research is complete.

Charles

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS STANDARDIZED TESTING

APPENDIX C

Letter of Solicitation



Letter of Solicitation

My name is Michele Tiedemann and I am currently conducting a survey for my dissertation, which is a requirement of the doctorate degree I am pursuing in the College of Education and Human Services at Seton Hall University. You are invited to participate in a web-based online survey. The purpose of this survey is to identify parents'/guardians' understanding and views regarding standardized testing of their Spanish-speaking children with limited English proficiency. The survey consists of 19 items relating to standardized testing and includes questions about parental involvement in testing, testing climate, and stress and anxiety related to standardized testing. The questions are all answered by choosing one of five possible responses ranging from not at all (1) to an extreme amount (5). Simply click on the link below to access the survey. Thank you very much for your valuable time and participation.

Participation: Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason. This survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete.

Benefits: You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your honest responses for this questionnaire may help to improve the schools' efforts in informing parents and guardians of Spanish-speaking students with limited English proficiency about standardized testing.

Risks: There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this study.

Confidentiality: Your survey answers will be sent to a link at SurveyMonkey.com where data will be stored in a password-protected electronic format and transferred to a USB memory stick. SurveyMonkey does not collect identifying information such as your name, email address, or IP address. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study. Though minimal, there is always a possibility of someone hacking into SurveyMonkey.

Contact: If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact me, Michele Tiedemann, at michtied@gmail.com or michele.tiedemann@shu.edu, or my research supervisor Dr. Luke Stedrak at luke.stedrak@shu.edu. We can be reached by mail at Seton Hall University, Jubilee Hall, 400 South Orange Ave, South Orange, NJ 07079 or by telephone at 973-275-2725.

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or that your rights as a participant in research have not been honored during the course of this project, or you have any questions, concerns, or complaints that you wish to address to someone other than the investigator, you may contact the Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board at 400 South Orange Avenue, Presidents Hall Rm. 325, South Orange, NJ 07079, telephone 973-313-6314, email irb@shu.edu.

Electronic Consent: Your participation in this electronic survey indicates your consent.

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS
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APPENDIX D

Raw Data Tables

Table 1	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Have Had the Results of Their Child's Standardized Tests Explained to Them by a Teacher or School Counselor</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Had Had Test Results Explained to Them</i>
52.50%	Not at all
47.50%	Some or moderate
0.00%	Significant or extreme

Table 2	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Feel Involved or Interested in Their Child's Standardized Testing</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Feel Involved or Interested in their Child's Standardized Testing</i>
20.08%	Not at all
34.66%	Some or moderate
45.25%	Significant or extreme

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS
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Table 3	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who View the Testing Climate as Healthy, Pleasant, and Positive for Their Child</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who View the Testing Climate as Positive</i>
2.78%	Not at all
62.96%	Some or moderate
34.26%	Significant or extreme

Table 4	
<i>Percentages of Students Who Experience Stress and Anxiety Over Standardized Tests as Noted by Their Parents</i>	
Percentage	<i>Amount of Stress and Anxiety</i>
34.44%	Not at all
54.38%	Some or moderate
11.18%	Significant or extreme

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS STANDARDIZED TESTING

Table D1	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Believe the Standardized Testing Program is Important for the Educational Progress of Their Child</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe the Standardized Testing Program is Important</i>
6.25%	Not at all
12.50%	Some
18.75%	Moderate
37.50%	Significant
25.00%	Extreme

Table D2	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Believe the Standardized Testing Program is Stressful for Their Child</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe the Standardized Testing Program is Stressful for Their Child</i>
29.63%	Not at all
29.63%	Some
25.93%	Moderate
14.81%	Significant
0.00%	Extreme

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS STANDARDIZED TESTING

Table D3	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Believe the Standardized Testing Program is Stressful for Teachers</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe the Standardized Testing Program is Stressful for Teachers</i>
19.23%	Not at all
42.31%	Some
30.77%	Moderate
7.69%	Significant
0.00%	Extreme

Table D4	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Believe Teachers are Threatened by the Testing Program</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe Teachers are Threatened by the Testing Program</i>
55.56%	Not at all
22.22%	Some
18.52%	Moderate
3.70%	Significant
0.00%	Extreme

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS STANDARDIZED TESTING

Table D5	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Feel Pressure to Help Their Child Score Well on Standardized Tests</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Feel Pressure to Help Their Child Score Well on Standardized Tests</i>
33.33%	Not at all
25.93%	Some
22.22%	Moderate
11.11%	Significant
7.41%	Extreme

Table D6	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Have Had the Results of Their Child's Test Explained to Them by a Teacher</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Have Had the Results of Their Child's Test Explained to Them by a Teacher</i>
34.62%	Not at all
50.00%	Some
15.38%	Moderate
0.00%	Significant
0.00%	Extreme

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS STANDARDIZED TESTING

Table D7	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Have Had the Results of Their Child's Test Explained to Them by a Counselor</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Have Had the Results of Their Child's Test Explained to Them by a Counselor</i>
70.37%	Not at all
29.63%	Some
0.00%	Moderate
0.00%	Significant
0.00%	Extreme

Table D8	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Believe the Climate Surrounding Testing in This School is Healthy</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe the Climate Surrounding Testing in This School is Healthy</i>
7.41%	Not at all
29.63%	Some
40.74%	Moderate
18.52%	Significant
3.70%	Extreme

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS
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Table D9	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who are Interested in the Results of Their Child's Test</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who are Interested in the Results of Their Child's Test</i>
3.70%	Not at all
14.81%	Some
22.22%	Moderate
29.63%	Significant
29.63%	Extreme

Table D10	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Believe Standardized Testing is a Waste of Time</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe Standardized Testing is a Waste of Time</i>
55.56%	Not at all
33.33%	Some
7.41%	Moderate
0.00%	Significant
3.70%	Extreme

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS STANDARDIZED TESTING

Table D11	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Believe the Teachers Genuinely Want Their Child to do Well on the Test</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe the Teachers Genuinely Want Their Child to do Well on the Test</i>
3.70%	Not at all
22.22%	Some
14.81%	Moderate
29.63%	Significant
29.63%	Extreme

Table D12	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Believe the Teachers are Concerned About the Test Results Impacting Their Job Security</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe the Teachers are Concerned About the Test Results Impacting Their Job Security</i>
44.44%	Not at all
29.63%	Some
18.52%	Moderate
7.41%	Significant
0.00%	Extreme

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS STANDARDIZED TESTING

Table D13	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Believe the Teachers are Concerned About the Pressure That Could be Placed on Them by the Principal if Their Classes Test</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe the Teachers are Concerned About the Pressure That Could be Placed on Them by the Principal if Their Classes Test</i>
48.15%	Not at all
25.93%	Some
25.93%	Moderate
0.00%	Significant
0.00%	Extreme

Table D14	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Believe the Teacher is Responsible for Working with Their Child to Improve His/Her Performance on Standardized Tests</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe the Teacher is Responsible for Working with Their Child to Improve His/Her Performance on Standardized Tests</i>
3.70%	Not at all
33.33%	Some
11.11%	Moderate
25.93%	Significant
25.93%	Extreme

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS
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Table D15	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Believe the Parents Have a Responsibility to Work with Their Child to Improve His/Her Performance on Standardized Tests</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe the Parents Have a Responsibility to Work with Their Child to Improve His/Her Performance on Standardized Tests</i>
14.81%	Not at all
14.81%	Some
14.81%	Moderate
33.33%	Significant
22.22%	Extreme

Table D16	
<i>Percentages of Students Who Like Testing Week Because They Have Less Homework and Less Instruction in Class as Noted by Their Parents</i>	
Percentage	<i>Students Who Like Testing Week Because They Have Less Homework and Less Instruction in Class as Noted by Their Parents</i>
29.63%	Not at all
29.63%	Some
29.63%	Moderate
11.11%	Significant
0.00%	Extreme

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS STANDARDIZED TESTING

Table D17	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Believe Their Child Tries to do Well on the Tests</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe Their Child Tries to do Well on the Tests</i>
0.00%	Not at all
11.11%	Some
25.93%	Moderate
40.74%	Significant
22.22%	Extreme

Table D18	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Believe the Principal Works Hard to Help Make the Testing Week as Pleasant as Possible for the Students</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe the Principal Works Hard to Help Make the Testing Week Pleasant</i>
0.00%	Not at all
22.22%	Some
51.85%	Moderate
18.52%	Significant
7.41%	Extreme

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF LEP PARENTS TOWARDS
STANDARDIZED TESTING

Table D19	
<i>Percentages of Parents Who Believe the Principal Works Hard to Help Make the Testing Week a Positive Experience for the Students</i>	
Percentage	<i>Parents Who Believe the Principal Works Hard to Help Make the Testing Week Positive</i>
0.00%	Not at all
29.63%	Some
40.74%	Moderate
22.22%	Significant
7.41%	Extreme